

ABSTRACT

Systems and methods are provided for treating a wellbore using a loop system to heat oil in a subterranean formation contacted by the wellbore. The loop system comprises a loop that conveys a fluid (e.g., steam) down the wellbore via a injection conduit and returns fluid (e.g., condensate) from the wellbore via a return conduit. A portion of the fluid in the loop system may be injected into the subterranean formation using one or more valves disposed in the loop system. Alternatively, only heat and not fluid may be transferred from the loop system into the subterranean formation. The fluid returned from the wellbore may be re-heated and re-conveyed by the loop system into the wellbore. Heating the oil residing in the subterranean formation reduces the viscosity of the oil so that it may be recovered more easily.